



North Dallas Gazette

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Far-Right Republicans push for controversial spending cuts impacting vulnerable communities

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

In a scathing op-ed, seasoned political strategist and former Democratic National Committee Chair Donna Brazile has accused far-right Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives of pursuing drastic and merciless reductions in programs that disproportionately support Black Americans and low-income individuals. Brazile, now a senior advisor at Virginia-based communications firm Purple Strategies, warned that a shutdown would prove devastating and hard to recover for specific populations.

With a pointed emphasis on the demographic disparities in poverty rates, Brazile highlighted the staggering contrast in figures: 17.1% of Black American families live below the poverty line. In comparison, only 8.6% of their white and Asian-American counterparts face the same economic hardship. The glaring inequality underpins Brazile's assertion that the proposed House Republican spending cuts, targeting crucial programs aiding low-income individuals, would inflict severe hardship on Black communities.

In the op-ed published by TheGrio, Brazile also noted that



A glaring inequality underpins Brazile's assertion that the proposed House Republican spending cuts, targeting crucial programs aiding low-income individuals, would inflict severe hardship on Black communities. (Photo via NNPA)

Hispanic families, grappling with a 16.9% poverty rate, and Native Americans, facing an alarming 25% poverty rate, would be profoundly affected by these proposed cuts.

The contentious nature of these potential cuts has ignited a fierce political battle on Capitol Hill, with far-right Republicans pushing their agenda even at the risk of a federal government shutdown. The impasse highlights the deep ideological divide within the House, with concerns over the welfare of vulnerable communities at the forefront of the debate.

Critics argue that these proposed cuts significantly threaten the so-

cial safety net, potentially exacerbating existing disparities in access to essential resources and opportunities. On the other hand, despite the Biden-Harris administration already shaving more than \$1 trillion off the national debt, MAGA Republicans and their supporters claim that the cuts are needed to show fiscal restraint and ensure the long-term stability of government finances.

"The Republican MAGA extremists putting vital programs on the chopping block in the House are following the orders of former President Donald Trump," Bra-

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People In The News ...



Laphonza Butler



Dr. Brian Williams

NDG Quote of the Week: "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."
— Maya Angelou

Laphonza Butler

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Contributor

Laphonza Butler will fill the U.S. Senate seat of the late Dianne Feinstein. The groundbreaking Senator died on September 29.

Newsom's decision was not on the political radar screen of most prognosticators.

With the selection of Butler, the decision of California's Governor will not include any of the currently announced candidates for U.S. Senate in 2024 in California. Those current



candidates include veteran members of Congress Barbara Lee and Adam Schiff.

"As we mourn the enormous loss of Senator Feinstein, the very freedoms she fought for — reproductive

freedom, equal protection, and safety from gun violence — have never been under greater assault. Laphonza will carry the baton left by Senator Feinstein, continue to break glass ceilings, and fight for all Californians in Washington, D.C.," wrote Gov. Newsom in a statement released on the evening of October 1 announcing Butler's appointment.

Butler will be sworn-in to the U.S. Senate this week.

Butler has been serving as the President of EMILY's List. The fundraising platform supports and funds women candidates

and amplifies issues that disproportionately impact women. EMILY's List was founded in 1985 by Ellen Malcolm and founding members Barbara Boxer, Ann Richards, Anne Wexler, and Donna Shalala. From 1985 through 2008, EMILY's List raised over \$240 million for political candidates.

The move by Newsom could assist him if he should run for higher office in 2024 or 2028. Newsom has been rumored to be on a short list of Democratic candidates who could run for President if for some reason Biden or Harris are

not options. But Newsom was recently asked about running for President and switched topics to the policies that he believed the party should be focused on.

Laphonza Butler will be yet another addition to the Congressional Black Caucus which is now on the brink of having 60 members for the first time in history. Though the current membership of the Congressional Black Caucus is 58, one more Black member is all but certain to enter Congress in Rhode Island after the resignation in May of Congressman David Cicilline. Former

Biden White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Deputy Director Gabe Amo won the Democratic nomination for Cicilline's seat. The election is on November 7.

Butler will be the only Black woman in the Senate. But Delaware Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester is expected to win the Senate seat vacated by Senator Tom Carper. Carper announced he would not run for re-election in 2024 and Rochester announced shortly afterwards that she would run for Carper's seat.

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Dr. Brian Williams

After working in Washington, D.C. as a gun safety advocate and policy advisor for Sen. Chris Murphy and helping pass the single most significant piece of gun legislation in our country's history, Dr. Brian Williams worked for Speaker Pelosi on healthcare policy related to accessible and affordable healthcare, pandemic preparedness, and bolstering the healthcare workforce. In Dallas, Dr. Williams served as Chair of the Dallas Citizens Police Review Board, helping to bridge the divide between police officers and our community.



Dr. Brian Williams last week received the endorsement of Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT) in his campaign for Texas' 32nd Congressional District. Senator Murphy, a stalwart advocate for gun safety, is known for work-

ing across the aisle to pass gun violence prevention legislation. Last year, Sen. Murphy sponsored the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the most significant gun safety legislation in nearly three decades. The bill expanded background checks, provided funding for red flag laws, worked to close the boyfriend loophole, and led to a \$250 million investment in Community Violence Intervention programs. Williams served as an advisor to Senator Murphy and his team on these measures to save lives, based on his decades of experience treating victims as a trauma surgeon.

"When tragedy struck in Uvalde last summer, I was lucky to have Brian Williams - a trauma surgeon with years of experience treating victims of gun violence - on my team as we wrote the most significant piece of gun safety legislation in thirty years. I am confident that the Bipartisan Safer Communities

Act marked the beginning of a new era for the gun safety movement, but we need more people like Brian in Congress to build on that success. There are few people more dedicated to serving others than Brian, and I am proud to endorse his campaign for Texas' 32nd Congressional District," said Senator Chris

Murphy.

"I'm honored to have the support of my former boss, Senator Chris Murphy, in my campaign to represent TX-32," said Dr. Brian Williams. "Watching the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act pass from the Senate gallery was one of

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Pvt. Travis T. King

Last week, Army Pvt. Travis T. King was released from North Korean custody and returned to American authorities. King is now back in the U.S., in San Antonio, said Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh. "Private King arrived early in the morning to San Antonio, where he will be going through a reintegration program," Singh said. "He'll be going through medical screenings, medical evaluations and then he'll be meeting with professionals to assess his emotional and mental health and he'll be meeting with counselors."

King will also be getting debriefed by U.S. military officials about what occurred while he was in



Claudine Gates / Wikipedia

North Korea and what kinds of discussions he might have had while there, Singh said.

Also, part of the plan, Singh said, is for King to be reunited with his family.

While serving in South Korea as a cavalry scout, King had faced disciplinary action. He was scheduled to fly back to the United States

to face additional administrative action through the Army. Instead of boarding a plane to return to the United States, however, King left the airport on his own.

On July 18, he joined a tour group of the Joint Security Area at the demilitarized zone in Panmunjom, Korea. While on that tour, King crossed into North Korea. He was held by North Korean authorities from July 18 through Sept. 27 — just over 70 days.

Singh said that right now, there is no word from the Defense Department regarding what additional disciplinary actions King will face through the Army now that he has returned home. Instead, she said, the department is focused on his health and well-being.

Have Medicare questions? I have answers.

I'm Lamonica Thomas, a licensed sales agent in Dallas-Fort Worth. When it comes to Medicare, it's important to consider all of your options. What works well for your neighbor may not be the best fit for you. I know the ins and outs of Medicare, and I'm ready to answer your questions and help you find a plan that fits your needs.

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'Greatest nation' debates aren't helpful

By Lee H. Hamilton

Is the United States the greatest nation in the world? It's a natural question to ask, given our penchant for displays of patriotism and our debates about American exceptionalism.

But I don't much like the question. Talking about how American greatness isn't a very helpful exercise. It doesn't do anything to make our country better or stronger. It plays to the stereotype of the ugly American, the idea that we are proud and boastful, insensitive to the values and accomplishments of others. No one likes to hear someone else talk about how important or powerful they are, whether it's a person or a nation.

We often say that actions speak louder than words. The subject of American greatness is a great example of the truth of that old saying.

A recent Pew Research Center survey tried to gauge public opinion on

the question, however, and the results are interesting. It asked if the United States "stands above" all other countries; if it's one of the greatest countries, along with others; or if other countries are better than the U.S.

One in five respondents said the U.S. stands above all others, while 52% said it is one of the greatest countries. Another 27% said other countries are better. The results showed a measurable decline in American self-esteem since Pew asked the same questions four years ago.

Republicans were more likely than Democrats to say America is the greatest country. That might be expected, given the GOP's traditional emphasis on patriotism, but the number of Republicans who take that position has declined: 31% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents said the U.S. "stands above" other countries, compared to 40% in 2019. Democrats are also less

likely today to say the U.S. is the greatest nation.

There's also a split among age groups. Americans over 65 are most likely to say the U.S. stands above other nations. Many of those under 30 say other nations are better.

What do people elsewhere in the world think? About six in 10 have a generally favorable view of the United States, according to a Pew survey of 23 middle-income nations this year. Respondents were more likely to have positive views of President Joe Biden than they had of Donald Trump when he was president. Reassuringly, over half said the U.S. contributes to peace and stability in the world.

At the same time, a large majority in the international poll said the U.S. is inclined to interfere in the affairs of other nations. That finding should give us pause. Our efforts to promote peace and stability won't be effective if we're seen as a bully that's pushing

other countries around.

Similarly, claiming that America is the greatest nation doesn't accomplish much. It takes time and energy that would be better spent doing whatever we can to make America the prosperous, secure, generous and truly democratic country that we want it to be.

Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the U.S. is the world's "indispensable nation." Trying to play that role may have led us to make some foreign policy mistakes, but it has also helped us take on tough challenges, most successfully when we act as part of alliances such as NATO. Our support for Ukraine in resisting Russian aggression is a good example.

Our country has done a lot of good things in the world. We could take credit for it, but it's better if we don't. Our leadership will be more effective if we let our actions speak for themselves.

Climate change is an urgent, difficult challenge

By Lee H. Hamilton

We can no longer pretend that climate change is just a theory or that it's a problem for the future. From deadly fires in Hawaii to devastating floods in the Northeast to record heat waves across much of the country, we see constant reminders of what a warming climate can do.

But how can we best respond to this existential threat? That's a tough question with no easy answers. Climate change is a global problem that crosses every kind of boundary. Real solutions will require cooperation and partnerships. But we can't wait for others to take the lead; every nation needs to do its share.

Some regions are more at risk and see the problem as especially serious. Islands and coastal areas are threat-

ened by rising seas. Much of Africa, the Middle East and Asia are vulnerable to drought, food insecurity and conflict, which climate change worsens.

It's easy to get bogged down in debates over who is most to blame. Is it advanced economies like the United States and Western Europe, which historically have produced the largest share of the greenhouse gas emissions that warm the planet? Or is it big countries like China and India, which produce the most emissions today?

Here in the United States, unfortunately, there's still a lot of disagreement over the issue. A recent Pew Research Center survey finds most Americans want the government to support clean energy, including solar and wind power. But

there's a deep partisan divide: Nearly 80% of Democrats say climate change is a major threat, compared to 23% of Republicans.

Scientists may disagree on the severity, but there's a consensus that we have a problem. The most recent report from the International Panel on Climate Change says it's "unequivocal" that human activities, primarily the burning of coal, oil and gas, contribute to global warming. Experts predict devastating consequences within decades if current trends continue.

We can rarely point to a specific catastrophe and blame climate change, but the evidence keeps piling up. Researchers have long warned that a hotter climate would bring more frequent and stronger storms, and we're seeing that now. The

average number of heat waves in U.S. cities has increased from two to six per year since the 1960s, the Environmental Protection Agency says. Phoenix saw a record 31 straight days this summer of temperatures over 110 degrees Fahrenheit. July 2023 was the hottest month, globally, in the 174-year records of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

More than 120 million Americans in the Midwest and Northeast have been under air quality advisories this year because of wildfires in Canada. The fire that killed more than 100 people in Lahaina, Hawaii, burned fast because unusually hot weather had dried vegetation and because

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Keep up with the news

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The seven most popular medicare scams to avoid during AEP



Lamonica Thomas
UNITED
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As we all know, Medicare Open Enrollment (AEP) starts October 15th through December 7th. Being cautious about scammers is a “daily task” nowadays but these calls seem to escalate much more during the fall time of the year. Here are examples of the most popular:

1. NEW MEDICARE CARDS ARE BEING ISSUED. This is NOT true. New cards have al-

ready been issued. If you haven't received one or if you have questions, call 1-800-MEDICARE. This is a SCAM to get your Medicare number and your identity.

2. YOUR MEDICARE IS ABOUT TO BE CANCELED AND THEY NEED YOUR IDENTITY. The scammer wants your date of birth, social security number and possibly your banking information. Avoid this call AT ALL COSTS. Again call 1-800-MEDICARE if you have questions.

3. YOU'RE PRE-APPROVED FOR A CHEAPER BETTER

PLAN. It sounds enticing but it's a lure to start the conversation and try to not only get your private information but change your Medicare plan. You could lose the ability to see doctors and actually receive less benefits.

4. YOU'RE ELIGIBLE FOR A REFUND FOR OVERPAYMENT OF BENEFITS: This scam is meant to get your banking information to send you funds that you may NEVER receive.

5. YOU QUALIFY FOR FREE MEDICAL SUPPLIES. If you're approached with this call the best thing to do is to call

your current Medicare plan and see if they offer free medical supplies. Most advantage plans offer free diabetic supplies and possibly more. Check with your current plan first and DO NOT GIVE OUT your personal information.

6. DON'T TALK TO ANYONE WHO SUGGESTS THEIR PLAN IS PREFERRED BY MEDICARE. Medicare also know as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, does NOT endorse a specific plan.

7. SPOOF WEBSITES CAN LURE YOU IN. You could get an email urging you to click on a link

that appears to be related to your Medicare plan. These websites, set up by scammers, could be anywhere in the world. Again, the goal is to get hold of enough identifying information to commit fraud with your Medicare ID, steal your money or even steal your identity.

During Open Enrollment, Medicare beneficiaries are encouraged by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to review your “current” coverage and make sure it will still be the best fit for you in 2024. Also, your Medicare Advantage provider should have sent you the Annual

Changes for your plan for 2024. It normally arrives in September and October of each year.

If you are confused or need help understanding how your plan will change or if a different plan could be a better fit, call me Lamonica Thomas, local Medicare Broker @ 972-249-8907.

Ms. Lamonica Thomas is a license agent specializing in assisting Medicare enrollment participants. Her articles will appear monthly through December. Reach her at: Lamonica Thomas <lathomas55@gmail.com> or call 972.249.8907.

Newer diabetes treatments are understudied in Black populations and may be less beneficial

(Newsweek) — New research analyzing the effects of two drugs used to treat type 2 diabetes indicates a consistent lack of cardiovascular and renal benefits in Black populations. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of severe illness and death associated with type 2 diabetes. Renal disease is also a common complication of type 2 diabetes.

The drugs, called sodium-glucose co-transporter 2 inhibitors (SGLT2-Is) and glucagon-like peptide 1 receptor agonists (GLP1-RAs), are some of the newer treatments prescribed to lower blood sugar levels in people with type 2 diabetes.

The research findings, published in the Journal of



Research analyzing the effects of two type 2 diabetes drugs indicate a consistent lack of cardiovascular and renal benefits in Black populations. (Mykenzie Johnson / Unsplash)

the Royal Society of Medicine, show that for White and Asian populations, SGLT2-Is and GLP1-RAs have beneficial effects on blood pressure, weight control and renal function, and significantly reduce the risk of severe heart problems

and kidney disease. However, the research shows no evidence of these beneficial effects in Black populations.

Researchers at the Diabetes Research Centre at the University of Leicester analyzed the results of 14 ran-

domized controlled trials of SGLT2-Is and GLP1-RAs reporting cardiovascular and renal outcomes by race, ethnicity and region.

Lead researcher Professor Samuel Seidu, Professor in Primary Care Diabetes and Cardio-metabolic Medicine at the University of Leicester, said: “Given the well-documented evidence that Black and other ethnic minority populations are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes and at a younger age, the consistent lack of benefits we observed among Black populations is concerning.

“Minimizing racial and ethnic variations in the cardiovascular and renal complications of type 2 diabetes requires targeted improved

access to care and treatment for those most at risk.”

The researchers suggest there are many factors that could have contributed to the lack of evidence of beneficial effects for Black and other non-White populations. Low statistical power due to small sample sizes of these populations may be partly responsible.

“It is quite clear from the current data that some racial/ethnic groups such as Black populations were underrepresented in all the included trials,” pointed out Professor Seidu.

Enrolment in the trials ranged from 66.6% to 93.2% for White populations, 1.2% and 21.6% for Asian populations, and 2.4% to 8.3% for Black

populations.

However, the researchers suggest that, given the consistent nature of the significant lack of beneficial effects across the majority of outcomes for Black populations, other factors may also be at play.

““Whether the differences are due to issues with under-representation of Black populations and low statistical power, or to racial/ethnic variations in the way the body and these drugs interact with each other needs further investigation,” said Professor Seidu. “It is therefore important that prescribers don't hasten to deny these newer treatments to Black populations on the back of this research.”

NIH launches community-led research program to advance health equity

The National Institutes of Health is funding a first-of-its-kind community-led research program to study ways to address the underlying structural factors within communities that affect health, such as access

to safe spaces, healthy food, employment opportunities, transportation, and quality health care. Through the NIH Common Fund Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society (ComPASS) program, NIH

made 26 awards to community organizations and a coordinating center, totaling approximately \$171 million over five years, pending the availability of funds. Through these awards, ComPASS will en-

able research into sustainable solutions that promote health equity to create lasting change in communities across the nation.

NIH is directly funding research projects led by community organizations.

Leaders from the organizations will work in collaboration with their research partners at academic institutions and other organizations in all phases of the research process. ComPASS projects study social deter-

minants of health — the social, physical, and economic conditions where people are born, grow, live, work, age, and play — that contribute to health inequities.

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Dallas CASA seeking more bilingual Spanish-speaking volunteers

Dallas CASA needs more bilingual Spanish-speaking volunteers to serve children who have been victims of abuse or neglect and are living in foster care.

Latinos represent 55% of the child population in Dallas County and 34% of children removed from unsafe homes, but only 13% of Dallas CASA volunteers are Latino.

For a child who speaks Spanish or has grown up in a Hispanic household, foster care can be an especially lonely and frightening place when there is a language and cultural barrier. A Dallas CASA volunteer who is bilingual can not



Dallas CASA

only bring comfort to the child but foster better and more timely communication with parties on the case leading to better long-term outcomes for children and their families.

Dallas CASA is planning a special online recruitment event for 6-7:30 p.m. on

Thursday, Oct. 26. To register, email Nancy Nevarez at nnevarez@dallascasa.org.

Guest speakers will include Juan Nevarez, executive vice president at Scout Energy Partners, and Amanda Paredes, senior brand supervisor at The In-

finite Agency. Nevarez and Parades will share their experiences as Dallas CASA volunteers and how being able to speak Spanish and understand the culture has allowed them a closer connection with families and children they are assigned to advocate for.

Dallas CASA serves children and families of all cultures, abilities, identities and backgrounds. The agency is committed to advocating for the best interest of all children in the foster care system and providing each child with the highest quality volunteer advocacy possible.

To meet this goal, Dal-

las CASA strives to recruit volunteers of diverse backgrounds so that our volunteers can reflect the diversity of children in the child welfare system.

Dallas CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) seeks to protect children, restore childhood and help child victims of abuse or neglect achieve their full potential.

The agency's trained and supervised community volunteers are assigned by judges to advocate for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect and are living in the protective care of the state. For many chil-

dren in foster care, their Dallas CASA volunteer is the only consistent, caring adult in their lives during a frightening, uncertain time.

Now in its 43rd year, Dallas CASA serves more children than any of the more than 900 CASA programs nationwide. While Dallas CASA envisions a day when all children experience safe and enriching childhoods, the agency currently is able to provide a child advocate for every Dallas child in need. In 2022, 1,324 Dallas CASA volunteers were assigned to advocate for 2,611 children in protective care. To learn more, visit dallascasa.org.

Dallas selected for Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), last week announced the launch of a nationwide health innovation network, ARPANET-H. The network is anchored by three Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) regional hubs. After a competitive application process that began in April, the City of Dallas and Pegasus Park were selected as home of the ARPA-H Customer Experience Hub to focus on developing accessible health solutions with the potential to be readily adopted. The

hub will take a proactive approach to diversifying clinical trials and reaching representative patient populations, an effort that will lead to better and more equitable health outcomes.

The selection of Dallas for the ARPA-H Customer Experience Hub is a significant recognition of Dallas' robust community of top-tier professionals in medical and biomedical research, said Mayor Eric L. Johnson. This would not have been possible without the support of our Congressional delegation and the partnership of our peer cit-

ies who joined with us in the effort to bring this institute to Texas. The ARPA-H hub will create an influx of jobs, talent, and innovation and further affirm Dallas' position as a global leader in medical and biomedical research," said Johnson.

The City has been actively working with its partners at Pegasus Park, including UT Southwestern, as well as its Texas Congressional delegation to advocate on behalf of Dallas throughout the process.

In a separate release, Congressman Colin Allred said, "This Hub will also

bring great jobs and supercharge economic development in an area where we are already growing."

Allred voted to fund the agency to accelerate the discovery of life-saving treatments and technologies in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022. He further voted to formally establish the agency and provide \$1.5 billion in funding for ARPA-H in Fiscal Year 2023 in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023. Allred is the representative U.S. House District 32,

which includes the corner of northeastern Dallas, and northeastern suburbs Garland, Richardson, Sachse, Wylie, the Park Cities, and Rowlett.

"North Texas is home to the best and brightest researchers and innovators, and Dallas being chosen as the site of the ARPA-H Customer Experience Hub shows we can still do big things when we work together as Texans," said Allred.

Dallas will be the physical site of the Customer Experience Hub, which will

put people at the center of ARPA-H programs and projects, developing health solutions that will be accessible, needed, and readily adopted. This hub will take a proactive approach to diversify clinical trials, reach representative patient populations, and capture outcomes data for future research leading to better outcomes for all.

In addition to the Customer Experience Hub in Dallas, the Health and Human Services Admin-

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LEGAL NOTICE

These Texas Lottery Commission scratch ticket games will be closing soon:

Game #	Game Name / Odds	\$	Official Close of Game	End Validations Date
2473	Lucky Symbols Overall Odds are 1 in 3.88	\$5	11/15/23	5/13/24
2481	50X Lucky Overall Odds are 1 in 4.13	\$5	11/15/23	5/13/24
2434	Million Dollar Loteria Overall Odds are 1 in 3.27	\$20	11/15/23	5/13/24
2442	\$1,000,000 Cash Blowout Overall Odds are 1 in 3.42	\$20	11/15/23	5/13/24

Texaslottery.com is the official source for all pertinent game information. Game closing procedures may be initiated for documented business reasons. These games may have prizes unclaimed, including top prizes. In addition, game closing procedures will be initiated when all top prizes have been claimed. During closing, games may be sold even after all top prizes have been claimed. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. For help with a gambling problem, ncpgambling.org. © 2023 Texas Lottery Commission. PLAY RESPONSIBLY.

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Urban climate research project helps shape minority students' science identity

(Newswise) — A rooftop seems like an unlikely place to start a science career, but on a sunny morning in May, several Northeastern Illinois University (Northeastern) students gathered on the top of a campus building. The students were accompanied by scientists from the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Argonne National Laboratory and Northeastern faculty as they installed scientific instruments capable of measuring wind, temperature, rainfall, snow accumulation, radiation and air pollution.

For many of the students, it was their first time participating in anything like this. And on that morning in May, the science identities of a handful of Chicago students began to form.

"We have a lot of students who are really interested in science, but they are also interested in making the world a better place. The kind of research we are doing with CROCUS combines scientific inquiry



CROCUS interns, science experts and community partners celebrate successful implementation of instruments at Chicago State University (Argonne National Laboratory / Newswise)

with issues of social and environmental justice. Being able to combine those two things together provides great opportunities for our students." — Greg Anderson, chair of Chemistry, Earth Science, Environmental Science and Physics at Northeastern

"People get into STEM professions by increasing their science identity," said Meridith Bruozas, Argonne's institutional partnerships director. "Science identity is where students have positive interactions with scientists and can visualize themselves in a science community. At Ar-

gonne, our programs help build student science identities."

Community Research on Climate & Urban Science (CROCUS), a DOE Urban Integrated Field Laboratory led by Argonne, is one of the programs helping shape the science identities of students. CROCUS, which launched in fall of 2022, involves 17 partner organizations from across the Chicago metropolitan area and the country and is funded by DOE's Office of Science, Office of Biological and Environmental Research. Together, the partners are working to

advance urban and climate sciences, understand the feedbacks between urban systems and climate, and find solutions to the challenges of the Chicago region's changing climate.

Of those 17 partners, four of the academic partners are minority-serving institutions (MSI) helping educate and train the next generation of scientists to tackle future urban climate challenges. This includes Northeastern, Chicago State University (CSU), City Colleges of Chicago and the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC).

The first CROCUS deployment of atmospheric measurement instrumentation occurred at Northeastern in May 2023. The students involved are working with the data streams from the instrumentation and learning how to visualize and infer outcomes from it. They will be gaining important data science skills that are sought after on the job market. They will also

use the data in class research projects, especially for Northeastern's new data science minor.

Greg Anderson, the chair of Chemistry, Earth Science, Environmental Science and Physics at Northeastern and CROCUS lead for the university, is most excited about the opportunities CROCUS will bring to his students.

"We have a lot of students who are really interested in science, but they are also interested in making the world a better place," Anderson said. "The kind of research we are doing with CROCUS combines scientific inquiry with issues of social and environmental justice. Being able to combine those two things together provides great opportunities for our students."

CSU's niche programs like geography and geographic information system (GIS) with an environmental focus were something Vela could not find else-

where. GIS is a system for storing and managing geographic data in the form of maps.

With environmental jobs growing fast, institutions like CROCUS partner universities could provide micro accreditations so that adults and students could get job training and improve their job outcomes.

Information about CROCUS internships can be found at crocus-urban.org. Summer internship opportunities are typically posted in the late fall.

Funded by the DOE's Office of Science, Biological and Environmental Research program, Community Research on Climate and Urban Science (CROCUS) studies urban climate change and its implications for environmental justice in the Chicago region. CROCUS is a collaborative study that involves academic, community and civic partners.

Learn more about CROCUS at crocus-urban.org.

How racism shapes Black motherhood for the nation's students

By Matt Shipman

(Newswise) — Being a mom is hard. Being a Black mom is especially hard. A new study from North Carolina State University underscores the ways that being a Black mother in the United States involves navigating aspects of parenthood that are explicitly tied to dealing with anti-Black racism.

"All mothers experience stress; but Black mothers in the U.S. experience additional stresses specifically related to parenting and racism," says Mia Brantley, author of the study and an assistant professor of sociology at NC State. "That has consequences for the health and well-being of Black mothers. If we want to develop ways to support Black moms and Black families, we need to have a deeper understanding of the challenges facing Black mothers — and how Black



Brantley categorizes the ways racism affects Black motherhood into three areas: protective mothering, resistance mothering and encumbered mothering. (Bruno Nascimento / Unsplash)

mothers respond to those challenges."

For this qualitative study, Brantley conducted in-depth interviews with 35 Black mothers from across the U.S. All of the study participants had at least one child between the ages of 10 and 24. The interviews were designed to collect information about how Black women think about motherhood and mothering, as well as how Black mothers feel race and racism influ-

ences both their parenting and the lives of their children.

"There is a broad understanding that motherhood is, while rewarding, also a demanding responsibility," Brantley says. "This study found that, while Black mothers share many of the same concerns as other mothers, Black motherhood is distinct. That's because — in addition to wanting their children to succeed — Black mothers also take steps to

both protect their children from racism and help their children learn to navigate a society where they will experience anti-Black racism."

Brantley categorizes the ways racism affects Black motherhood into three areas: protective mothering, resistance mothering and encumbered mothering.

Protective mothering refers to practices designed to help Black children avoid racism. Specifically, Black mothers will often restrict children's activities or behaviors in an attempt to reduce the likelihood that their children — particularly sons — will face racist comments or actions. Black mothers also take steps to encourage agency — particularly for daughters — so that their children feel able to stand up for themselves.

Resistance mothering refers to efforts to promote positive self-image, with the goal of combatting rac-

ist stereotypes their children encounter outside of the home. These activities might include educating children about Black artists, leaders and accomplishments.

"Resistance mothering is really about empowering Black children and parents, so that they take pride in themselves and their culture," Brantley says.

Encumbered mothering refers to the fact that Black mothers feel the need to be constantly hyperaware of the risks that racism poses to their children.

"Black mothers report that they are unable to fully enjoy and celebrate the accomplishments of their children, because they can't 'turn off' their fears about how racist behavior may affect their kids," Brantley says. "Black mothers feel that they always have to deal with preconceived notions about Black mothers and children, and that soci-

ety essentially gives Black women no room for error.

"We talk about motherhood as universal, but all mothers do not experience motherhood in the same way," Brantley says. "Black women face stresses that are unique to their experiences as mothers — stresses that continue into their children's adulthood. While Black mothers are taking steps to protect their children, the stress of doing so may carry costs for the health and well-being of Black women.

"This study gives us a framework for understanding, studying and talking about Black motherhood. And, hopefully, that gives us a starting point for a more in-depth analysis of the toll that motherhood takes on Black women, and how we — as a society — can do more to support these women."

See STUDENTS, Page 13

Murphy Maize Days festival moves to early October this year

MURPHY -- Murphy Maize Days, the area's highly-anticipated salute to fall, is approaching, this year moving to the first Saturday in October at Murphy Central Park. As usual, the event is free to attend and open to the public.

The events will include live music, food, carnival games, vendors, a new and exciting competitive event, and kid activities. Because food is such an important part of the day's event, a varied lineup of food vendors and food trucks will provide a wide array of delicious snacks and meals. The day's activities will conclude with a traditional fireworks display at 9:45 p.m.

Entertainment on the Main Stage will include the All-Funk Radio Show as the opening act at 6:30 p.m., sponsored by Methodist Hospital Richardson. The evening's headliner is Who's Bad: The Ultimate



Michael Jackson Experience, taking the stage at 8 p.m.

Budding artists and creative types are invited to contribute their talents to the new Community Mural, sponsored by the Creative Arts Guild of Wylie. A \$15 fee allows individuals to paint a square-foot size panel on the mural. All paints and materials will be provided. While the mural is designed for teens and above, a free craft for younger kids, sponsored by Primrose School of Breckinridge Park and Creative

Arts Guild of Wylie, will be available.

Fans and players of the popular Corn Hole tossing game can enter a two-person team in the inaugural Maize Days Corn Hole Tournament. Sponsored by Farmers Electric, teams will play to win valuable prizes. Champions will share a \$300 gift card, while the second-place team will walk away with a \$100 card. See registration instructions and rules below.

Pumpkin games will return this year, and players

will be able to once again try their hand at pumpkin bowling. Punkin' Chunkin' will also benefit the Murphy Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Fund.

For the kids, new carnival games have been added to the Kids Midway, and a new Sports Zone is being debuted, encouraging community members to REcreate at the event with different sports activities and free play. A new hay track tricycle race for toddlers, sponsored by Oak Brook School, will be located near the touch-a-truck section, and a larger pool of corn awaits the cornwading crowd. Also new is a 360-video booth, sponsored by Primrose School.

Early holiday shoppers will be delighted with the relocation of the Maize Market to the more expansive and spacious parking

lot. Many of the attendees' favorite vendors are returning along with some new ones. The new location will provide a shopper-friendly layout and a more intimate vendor experience.

For a list of events, activities, food vendors, performing acts, and other details, follow Murphy Maize Days on Facebook or visit www.maizedays.com. Registration for Corn Hole is now open at <https://secure.rec1.com/catalog> under the Special Events tab. Entry fee is \$30 per team, and registration is required. Walk-ups will not be accepted. Each of the two team members must be at least 18 years of age. Check in at the tournament site is noon, with play beginning at 1 p.m. Standard tournament rules and brackets will apply with officials making all final decisions.

Murphy is a fast-growing community located in Collin County. The population is approximately 21,200, generally characterized as highly educated with a median household income well above the state average. With more than 80 percent of the land developed, the community is dominated by single-family residences. City planners strive to preserve a family-oriented community with a strong sense of place.

The 2023 version of Murphy Maize Days is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 7 at 550 North Murphy Road starting at noon and ending at 9:45 p.m. Ample parking is available at Tom Kimbrough stadium, a half-block north of the venue. Free shuttling to and from the parking area will be provided throughout the day and evening.

RESEARCH, from Page 5

istration announced that Cambridge, in the Greater Boston area, was chosen as the site of the ARPA-H Investor Catalyst Hub. This hub will focus on speeding the transition of innovative ideas into practical, accessible solutions, while engaging researchers, entrepreneurs, and investors.

The site for a Stakeholder and Operations hub is expected to be announced later this year.

Together, the hubs and spokes will collaborate with ARPA-H to catalyze game-changing breakthroughs in science and medicine to improve health outcomes. ARPA-

NET-H will enable health problems to be solved faster, with accessible, equitable solutions reaching the American public more quickly. The network advances President Biden's Unity Agenda by driving innovation of new ways to prevent, detect, and treat for cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and other diseases.

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Universal Academy sets sights on the future of education

In America, the process of education is moved forward by those who understand that the future of America is ensured by a commitment to educating and preparing young people. Janice Blackmon, CEO and co-founder of Universal Academy — along with her late sister, renowned educator Diane Harris — remain at the leading edge of this endeavor. Their school, Universal Academy has a unique vision: To think differently about academics, to challenge expectation and remain a premier educational insti-



Courtesy photo

tution in the Southwestern U.S. Along with a stunning group of teachers and administrators, they have succeeded at this for 25 years. The school, founded

on September 4, 1998, has three campuses.

Dana Jobe, PhD, school superintendent for Universal Academy, reminds us of a transformational mo-

ment in her life.” I attended a parent meeting and Ms. Harris, Ms. Blackmon and Ms. Jackson’s passion for life — and love for education overwhelmed me. It aligned with everything I believed about how children should be educated. At that moment, I committed to them and to the children. It remains my unwavering choice.”

When Universal opened in 1998, the enrollment was

close to 99% Black. The school had students from many Dallas communities-- and as far southeast as Pleasant Grove. Now, the school has emerged into a different enrollment demographic that is multi-racial and multi-ethnic.

Each of the three campuses operate from a common vision and integrated educational philosophy, but are unique in their student population and family base.

For the last year for which data is available, Universal was awarded an accountability rating of ‘A’ from the Texas governing associations and a bronze award for excellence from the periodical, U.S. News and World Report. This is amplified because Universal is the lone charter school in Texas licensed and approved to teach a curricu-

See UNIVERSAL, Page 12

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Ranky Tanky set for exclusive Eisemann Center engagement, Oct. 13

RICHARDSON – Eisemann Center Presents continues the 2023-2024 Season with Ranky Tanky and special guest LISA FISCHER on Friday, October 13 at 8:00 pm in the Hill Performance Hall. The soulful songs of the Gullah culture are brought to life by this band of native South Carolinians, Ranky Tanky, who mix jazz, gospel, funk, and R&B. The GRAMMY-winning powerhouse vocalist Lisa Fischer joins them as a special guest. Fischer has toured for over 25 years with the Rolling Stones and made a standout appearance in the Oscar-winning documentary “20 Feet From Stardom.”

Ranky Tanky has achieved many firsts for South Carolina’s West African-rooted Gullah community since their formation, earning yet another milestone at the 2019 GRAMMY Awards by taking home the Best Regional



Roots Album prize for their sophomore release, Good Time. The album, which also hit No. 1 on Billboard’s Contemporary Jazz Chart, combines songs carried down through generations in the Sea Islands of the Southeastern United States with the band’s own original compositions in the Gullah tradition. In Ranky Tanky’s hands, this

style of music has been described as “soulful honey to the ears” (NPR) while being covered by the New York Times, NPR’s Fresh Air and The TODAY Show, who had the band on for a performance. Ranky Tanky (a Gullah phrase for “get funky”) is a group of five lifelong friends from Charleston, South Carolina who have established them-

selves as passionate global ambassadors for their local culture and community, helping to faithfully preserve the traditions originated by African Americans in the coastal South during slavery that are kept alive through the present day. Ranky Tanky was honored to be featured in President Biden’s inauguration event, We The People.

After four decades of featured background singing with icons like Luther Vandross, The Rolling Stones, Chaka Khan, Tina Turner, and Nine Inch Nails, MS. LISA FISCHER set out to take center stage with her own humble, heartfelt song. The 2013 Best Documentary Oscar-winning film Twenty Feet from Stardom altered the course of Lisa’s musical journey, telling her story, with clips of her legendary duets with Sting or with Mick Jagger on “Gimme Shelter,” left audiences eager to see and hear more, so Lisa took the chance to set out on her own reinventing classic songs with JC Maillard and Grand Baton among others.

Tickets are \$37-\$57 and are available for purchase online at www.eisemanncenter.com or by calling the Eisemann Center Ticket Office at 972.744.4650. Group discounts are available for 10

or more persons. Lobby and Ticket Office hours are 10 am – 6 pm Monday through Saturday and during all public events.

About the Charles W. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts: The Center, a City of Richardson facility, is a hub for arts and culture, dedicated to presenting exceptional and innovative artistic experiences. The center hosts a diverse range of performances, exhibitions, and educational programs, aiming to enrich the community through artistic expression. The Eisemann Center is in the Galatyn Park Urban Center at 2351 Performance Drive in Richardson, Texas. The Eisemann Center is easily accessible from Highway 75 North taking the Galatyn Parkway/ Renner Road exit going north and the Galatyn Parkway/Campbell Road exit going south or from the DART light rail station at Galatyn Park.

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STATE FAIR OF TEXAS

High School Battle of the Bands returns after three-year pause

After a long hiatus due to challenges posed by the pandemic, Dallas I.S.D has partnered with The Confidence Group to bring the iconic, annual High School Battle of the Bands back to Dallas. The event, which has historically drawn hundreds of passionate music enthusiasts, took place at Sprague Athletic Complex last Saturday.

Since the 1980s, the Dallas United Battle of the Bands has been a cultural cornerstone at the heart of the Dallas community. People from across the nation and throughout the state come out to the State Fair Classic at the Cotton Bowl Stadium not only for action-packed football, but also to see two prominent southern HBCU bands, Grambling State University and Prairie View A&M University, face off on the field during the halftime show. The lo-



The legendary marching band challenge takes to the field for the first time since the COVID 19 global pandemic featuring live entertainment, special features and college sponsorship presentations. (Courtesy photo)

cal talent of 14 participating North Texas schools also shined with high school and junior high school marching bands competing for scholarships and bragging rights.

Area high schools took center stage, including Wilmer Hutchins, Skyline, Sunset High, David W. Carter, Yvonne A. W.W. Samuell, James Madison, Franklin D. Roosevelt, L.G. Pinkston High, Hill-

crest, Justin Kimball High, as well as Ewell Townview Magnet Center, D.A. Huley "STEAM" Middle School, Billy E. Dade Middle School, and Oliver W. Holmes Humanities/Communications Academy.

The Confidence Group, an educational excellence firm that has positively impacted the lives of over 50,000 Dallas students

See BANDS, Page 13



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RANKY TANKY



With Very Special Guest Lisa Fischer!



The soulful songs of the Gullah culture are brought to life by this band of native South Carolinians, Ranky Tanky, who mix jazz, gospel, funk, and R&B. The GRAMMY-winning vocalist Lisa Fischer joins them as a special guest.

Friday, October 13 at 8 p.m.

For tickets and more information:
www.eisemanncenter.com

UNIVERSAL, from Page 8



lum shaped and authored by the preeminent British institution— Cambridge University.

Janice Blackmon recognizes the deep significance of this: “We live in Texas and we love Texas but we are compelled to prepare Texas children for a world that is much bigger and far more complex. The Cambridge affiliation affords us the unique opportunity to push toward our education mission.”

35,000 students have matriculated through Universal Academy. The school retains a 100% graduation rate. Even today, many of the students participate in dual credit programs yielding an Associate Degree upon high school graduation.

tion.

Diane Harris — the school’s co-founder was the standard bearer to make this a reality. Harris asserted that every child is gifted and talented. Her years in the classroom taught her that when students arrived in school hungry and disillusioned, the first adult they encountered was their teacher. “As a practical matter” says Janice Blackmon, “Universal expends enormous energy in training our teachers as leaders. We prepare our teachers the UA way. And, we are proud to say, ‘it’s different.’”

Introducing Farming To Urban Youth At CJ Legacy Ranch

Nutrition and food impacts every aspect of life.



Courtesy photos

Universal Academy’s new Bartonville Campus in Denton is inaugurating an innovative ‘farm-to-market’ agricultural pilot curriculum to show how this works. Each UA campus will be a part of this stunning new endeavor. This program is the unique vision of Janice Blackmon. “We will teach and train high school students to grow, process and distribute food. We will provide them with an immersive experience in agriculture in America.”

Additionally, students will learn horsemanship through the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International. The Bartonville location has achieved an important accreditation from this group. “The expanded goal,” says Blackmon, “is to use horsemanship as therapy for children who are overcoming disabilities. Seeing these children bond with these massive, beautiful animals is a profound experience for all of us.”

Returning To Dallas – A Commitment

To ‘Urban/At-Risk’ Children

Universal Academy is actively seeking ‘urban/at-risk’ students from all of Dallas county. The school believes that there is a unique set of challenges impacting the education of all children in the United States. The school’s unique philosophy— and proven track record— improves graduation rates while creating a better path forward for ‘urban/at-risk’ children.

“We operated buses from all over Dallas county to

demonstrate our commitment to educating all children. We are prepared, ready and available to begin again. All that anyone has to do is contact us,” said Sheraton Duffey, PhD and principal of the Irving campus.

“In the past, we ran buses all over Dallas county to bring students to the Irving campus. We are ready, prepared and available to start that again. All you need to do is contact us. We’ll take it from there,” said Janice Blackmon.

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CLIMATE, from Page 3

winds from a Pacific hurricane drove the flames.

International responses to climate change have proceeded in fits and starts. The Kyoto Protocol, which took effect in 2001, was a first effort but had limited support. The Paris Agreement, starting in 2015, required countries to set targets for cutting emissions,

but disagreements remain over how to monitor compliance and how to protect and compensate vulnerable countries.

The issues are difficult. Should we prioritize slowing climate change or mitigating its impact? Do we focus on regulating industry or on promoting new technology? Should we

turn away from fossil fuels immediately or gradually reduce their use? These are real questions.

But there shouldn’t be any doubt that this is urgent. The disasters that we’re seeing now are sure to get worse if we don’t act. It may be a cliché, but we only have one Earth. We need to do what we can to ensure future generations can live here and thrive.

BUTLER, from Page 2

“Throughout her career, Laphonza Butler has been a strong voice for working families, LGBTQ rights, and a champion for increasing women’s representation in politics. I’m honored to welcome her to the United States Senate. Governor Newsom’s swift action

ensures that Californians maintain full representation in the Senate as we navigate a narrow Democratic majority. I look forward to working together to deliver for the people of California,” wrote California U.S. Senator Alex Padilla in a statement.

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent investigative journalist and the publisher of Black Virginia News. She is a political analyst who appears regularly on #RolandMartinUnfiltered. She can be contacted at LBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at @LV-Burke.



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Customers distance themselves after socially unacceptable mentions of brands on social media

By Marilyn Stone

Researchers from University of Arkansas and Northeastern University published a new article examining social media disengagement—the psychological motivation to distance oneself from a brand on social media. The article “For Shame! Socially Unacceptable Brand Mentions on Social Media Motivate Consumer Disengagement” appeared in the *Journal of Marketing*, authored by Daniel Villanova and Ted Matherly.

Companies know that driving consumer engagement with their brands on social media is an important

part of the modern marketing toolkit. They also know that it is easier to keep existing users than to acquire new ones. And while consumers can both increase their engagement with a brand or disengage, less is known about the drivers of disengagement.

This new article investigates social media disengagement, which is the manifestation on social media of the psychological motivation to distance oneself from a brand. Understanding social media disengagement is critical because it can undermine the reach of future marketing content. For example, when someone unfollows a

brand on Twitter, that consumer is no longer directly reachable by the brand’s Twitter presence, nor are that consumer’s followers, who will no longer see the brand’s content via the consumer’s interactions.

Just as customer retention is understood to have drivers that are distinct from customer acquisition, the reasons why consumers engage with brands on social media may not completely overlap with why those same consumers disengage. The researchers studied one potential driver of why consumers who are highly connected to a brand may choose to disengage from it: their observation of socially

unacceptable mentions of the brand on social media. They propose these behaviors threaten the identity of highly connected consumers, leading to consequences for the brand.

The study finds that when consumers observe socially unacceptable brand mentions, such as profanity-laden tweets, they become motivated to distance themselves from the brand. This motivation to distance manifests on social media in heightened disengagement intentions (i.e., a desire to reduce posting) and even unfollowing the brand on social media.

Socially unacceptable brand mentions do not affect

all consumers equally. Villanova explains that “these problematic posts have a greater impact on people who are more connected to the brand. They threaten a part of these consumers’ identities and generate vicarious shame. Unlike guilt, which involves a personal sense of wrongdoing and a motivation to atone for the wrongdoing, shame leads to weakness and incompetence and a desire to withdraw and distance from the situation.”

Consumers who have integrated the brand into their concept of themselves are more likely to view other people’s socially unacceptable brand mentions as

reflecting poorly on their shared brand-related identity. Whereas consumers with weaker self-brand connections can view socially unacceptable brand mentions and move on, consumers with stronger self-brand connections experience vicarious shame when seeing these behaviors, driving their desire to disengage from the brand.

One of the researchers’ studies looks at fans of ten Major League Baseball teams that competed in the 2018 postseason and finds that fans who were strongly connected to the brand were more likely to unfollow it

See BRANDS, Page 16

Allred applauds UT-Dallas on \$30 million energy production, storage grant

WASHINGTON — The University of Texas at Dallas received a \$30 million energy research grant from the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD). The award, which creates a prototype Energy Storage Systems Campus, is the largest allocation from a federal agency that the University has received to date. The project will leverage and stimulate over \$200 million

in private capital.

After the announcement last week, Congressman Colin Allred said, “UT-Dallas and its faculty have once again proved that they are a national leader in the next generation of energy research.” I am proud that they received this grant that will help ensure Texans continue to lead our energy economy. I will continue to work

across the aisle to support our research institutions and universities to help create jobs, grow our economy and strengthen domestic energy security.”

The Manufacturing Capability Expansion and Investment Prioritization (MCEIP) office at DOD, awarded a three-year, \$30 million project to establish an energy storage systems

campus. The campus will leverage over \$200 million in private capital to accelerate the transition and scaling of next-generation batteries, while reducing dependence on scarce critical materials. It also drives workforce development by bringing together universities, trade schools and businesses to train North Texans for good-paying jobs of the future.

The BEACONS center will focus on four main goals:

- Optimizing existing battery systems, including integrating robotics and automation into manufacturing.
- Fostering the development of new battery chemistries that reduce the use of scarce raw materials.
- Identifying and tracking supply chain challenges

for critical minerals, such as lithium, needed in energy storage systems.

- Developing the workforce needed for energy storage system development and manufacturing.

In addition, the initiative will provide access to facilities to help entrepreneurs design, develop and demonstrate novel energy storage systems.

NIH, from Page 4

“The ComPASS research model harnesses diverse perspectives and expertise to examine systemic factors that impact the health of individuals, communities, and populations,” said NIH Acting Director Lawrence Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D. “We are excited to see how results from these awards exemplify the transformative power of community-driven research.”

The projects will examine underlying conditions and environments that influence health outcomes by enabling the development, implementation, and assessment of structural interventions. Structural interventions are meant to alter social determinants of health by changing fac-

tors that create differences in opportunities to achieve optimal health.

Each award will foster the design of strategies to improve health outcomes through innovative structural interventions to address community concerns, such as economic development, social and community context, neighborhood characteristics, health care access and quality, and nutrition and food environment. Community organizations and their research partners will work together to develop a structural intervention, launch it within their communities, and then assess whether the intervention improves health outcomes. Several examples of ComPASS-supported

research projects, which focus on populations that experience health disparities, include:

- Supporting access to healthy food in underserved rural communities through the delivery of food boxes to local stores and individuals, and facilitating local food harvesting, processing, and distribution in the community. The project will measure whether these interventions reduce hunger, improve diet quality, promote healthy weight, and protect people against chronic diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
- Assessing whether early childcare strategies improve mental health for children and their parents and guardians. This project will develop and examine

community strategies that increase access to public early childcare, education, and programming to support young children and families in areas with limited access to childcare.

- Enhancing access to health care through individualized travel information and resources along with a transportation stipend for health care and related trips. The project will assess whether improved transportation access can reduce emergency department readmissions and secondary infections, decrease hospital costs, and improve disease management.

- Improving access to quality health care for older adults from sexual and gender minority populations by creating culturally appropriate and inclusive

protocols in the local health system. The project will measure how these changes in the local health system affect overall physical and mental health.

- Assessing whether enhancing telehealth models in rural communities can improve preventative screening and disease management for cancer, depression, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other chronic diseases among agricultural workers. The project will improve telehealth by transforming the workers’ access to affordable, reliable high-speed broadband internet.

NIH will gain valuable experience and insight into how to support successful future community-led health research. Each project will also contribute valuable data to a growing body

of knowledge about social determinants of health and structural inequities.

The ComPASS program is funded by the NIH Common Fund and managed collaboratively by NIH staff from the Common Fund; National Cancer Institute; National Institute of Mental Health; National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities; National Institute of Nursing Research; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; and NIH Office of Research on Women’s Health, with many of the NIH Institutes Centers and Offices providing input and participating in program development and management. More information is available on the ComPASS program website: <https://commonfund.nih.gov/compass>.

SLU speech pathologist advocates for minorities in rising career field

ST. LOUIS -- Though the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the employment of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to grow 19% from 2022 to 2032, a Saint Louis University speech pathologist says there aren't enough students majoring in the profession, particularly from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Often overshadowed by more well-known health fields such as nursing,

Travis Threats, Ph.D., professor and chair of SLU's Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences, says there's a lack of racial and ethnic diversity among students in SLP programs. Threats cites a lack of awareness about the role of SLPs and their impact on clientele.

"Less than 10% of those entering the profession are minorities," he said. "If first-generation and minority students aren't viewing

SLP as a viable career field, that creates a pipeline and equity issue."

In fact, 8.8% of ASHA members and affiliates certified in SLP self-identify as minorities and 3.7% as Black; 6.6% of ASHA members and affiliates self-identify as Hispanic or Latino, according to a 2022 Member & Affiliate Profile by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

"Because of the increas-

ing diversity in our population, the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures is more important than ever before," he said. "Research across education and health care fields has demonstrated better outcomes when the client and clinician share more cultural background characteristics."

SLPs evaluate, diagnose and treat people with speech, language and/or

swallowing difficulties. They work with many types of patients of all ages, including people with acquired disorders such as stroke or Parkinson's disease and children with developmental disorders such as stuttering, autism, and speech or language delays. They also work with children and adults with developmental and acquired swallowing disorders, such as those secondary to cerebral palsy or head trauma.

Threats says that some of the projected growth in the field is due to medical advances improving the survival rate of children with complex medical conditions, like those born prematurely who are more likely to develop disabilities and an aging baby-boom population. Ensuring that they have hands-on experience with patients in the clinic is a critical step in preparing students to work in this growing field.

BANDS, from Page 10

through academic programs, social-emotional wellness resources, and character development, has been a proud sponsor of the Battle of the Bands for three years and is excited to revive this cherished Dallas tradition to give back to the community.

"Providing scholarships and music programs to students, particularly minority students, is a game-changer for them. It not only allows them to explore their

talents and interests, but it opens doors to potential careers in the arts," said Isaac Barnes, CEO of The Confidence Group. "I am honored to invest and support in the future of young talents. The Confidence Group prides itself on helping young people thrive in becoming responsible and compassionate citizens who are equipped to face the challenges of the future. It is definitely a rewarding experience."

Dean Hill, legendary band director who worked in Dallas ISD for 47 years, has been a catalyst for the Battle of the Bands for many years. Even after retirement, he still volunteers his time giving back to local elementary, middle school, and high school band programs.

"The High School Battle of the Bands is an exciting event for bands to showcase their God-given talents. This event is like no other for the students, schools

and the community," said Dean Hill. "The level of excitement is unprecedented, and the band directors will experience a greater level of competence, confidence and commitment from their members in preparing for an amazing, winning show. Thank you to DISD, Evans Engraving, The Confidence Group and all the participating bands for helping us make this happen this year."

Three high school students were awarded \$1000 scholarships during the

event, and other prizes were awarded to students. Also included was a special appearance from the Confidence Kids, four real-life characters developed by The Confidence Group's Chief Operations Officer, Raven Barnes, dedicated to promoting values like honesty, good manners, sharing

and taking turns.

All proceeds from the battle will be donated to DISD band programs for continued support of their fine arts programs.

To learn more about the High School Battle of the Bands and The Confidence Group, visit <https://theconfidencegroup.com/>.

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The study, "Can't Just Send Our Children Out: Intensive Motherwork and Experiences of Black Motherhood," is published in the journal Social Problems. The work was done with support from the

National Institute on Aging under grant number 5R01AG069251-02; the Ohio State University Institute for Population Research; and a University of South Carolina SPARC grant.

WILLIAMS, from Page 2

the proudest moments of my life. The bill was the culmination of all the work I've done – as a surgeon, researching solutions to gun violence and training the next generation of surgeons to respond to it, and as a gun safety advocate working to change the narrative – to save lives. I look forward to working with Senator Murphy in Congress to pass the bold but common-sense reforms we desperately need to make our schools, homes, and communities safer."

Senator Murphy joins

Representative Seth Moulton (MA-06) in endorsing Williams, as well as a variety of political organizations seeking to elect doctors and veterans to Congress. Most recently, Williams received the endorsement of Brady PAC, one of the nations' foremost organizations that supports candidates who will take action to end gun violence in office. Earlier this summer, he received the endorsement of Vote-Vets, 314 Action, Serve America, New Politics, and Doctors in Politics.



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Out to Pastor: How Much Is Laughter Really Worth?

By Dr. James L. Snyder

Of all the things I prioritize in my life, laughter is at the top of the list. I appreciate laughter more than any other thing.

Some people get paid for their jokes, while others pay mightily. I am in the latter category. I like to make people laugh, but sometimes it costs me.

Whenever I see somebody with a frown, my first thought is how to make that person laugh. If it's in the supermarket and they're walking down the aisle toward me, I put in gear something to make them laugh. Usually, it works, but once in a while, it doesn't.

Where my jokes don't fly too well is with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. I try the best I can to make her laugh, and occasionally, I succeed. When I fail, there is a price to be paid.

For example, our birthdays are two days apart in July. We celebrated our birthdays at one of our favorite restaurants this past year.



After finishing our dinner, they brought dessert, and then The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me and said, "Do you feel old today?"

I have difficulty taking things seriously, so I reached across the table, took hold of her arm, squeezed it very gently, and said, "I feel old now."

You might be surprised I was the only one laughing at the table.

Getting into trouble with some joke is not that bad. I haven't gotten into too much trouble, but once in a while, I do.

Like everybody else, I get these scam calls, particularly concerning Medicare upgrades. I should be grateful that so many people want to help me upgrade

my Medicare program. And yet, being a Pennsylvania Dutchman, I don't trust people who want to give me something for free.

I got a call the other day, and they wanted to upgrade my Medicare plan so that I had everything I deserved. Then they asked me how old I was. That was the switch that turned on the light bulb in my head.

"I really don't know," I said as thoughtfully as possible, "every year my age changes and I just can't keep up to date with it."

There was a pause on the other end of the phone line, and finally, that person started speaking French and told me a lot about my mother. Then there came the "click."

I laughed and used it sev-

eral times since.

Several weeks ago, I had a dental appointment to fix some of my teeth. I can't imagine being a dentist and spending my whole career looking into people's mouths, especially me with bad breath.

I went into the office on my appointed day, signed in, and then took a seat.

Shortly, the lady at the desk asked me to come forward. I did not quite know what she wanted.

She showed me a file and asked, "Is this you?"

I looked at the file, looked back at her, and said, "No, that is not me."

Looking a little frustrated, she said maybe she got the wrong file.

"No," I said, looking at her. Then I pointed to my chest and said to her, "This is me and that is just paper with my name on it."

People sitting in the waiting room started giggling, and finally, the lady at the desk got what I said and started laughing. "So," she said laughing, "this paper is not you."

I love it when a plan comes together.

In minutes, I was called to go in, and one of the dentist's assistants took me to the room to prepare me for the process. There was a long process, and she did everything but throw me over the moon.

Finally, she finished her work, and the dentist came in. I had three teeth that needed to be worked on. The first thing he did was to give some numbing shots in my mouth, and everything went numb. Then, he was ready to do the work.

I sat in that chair for maybe an hour with my mouth open and the dentist on one side of me poking in and his assistant on the other side doing what she was supposed to do, and it was a long process. The dentist talked to me, but I was in such a position that I couldn't answer back.

His assistant on my left side was doing an excellent job, at least I think so, but my mouth was so numb I wouldn't have known otherwise.

Finally, the process was over, and the assistant, a very nice young lady, asked me, "How do you feel

now?"

I didn't have to think, but I responded immediately, "I feel like a woman."

The assistant looked at me with wonder and said, "What?"

"I feel like a woman because my mouth has been open for such a long time."

It took a while for her to get it, and she did not think it qualified for laughter.

I tried to laugh, but my mouth was so numb I could hardly talk.

Later that day, I was reminded of what the Bible says. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones" (Proverbs 17:22).

Much of our problems can be dealt with through a merry heart. We look for artificial medicine that does not get to the heart of our problems.

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SPENDING, from Page 1

zile asserted. This week, Trump wrote on his social media site that they should make no compromises with mainstream Republicans and Democrats.

"UNLESS YOU GET EVERYTHING, SHUT IT DOWN!" Trump wrote on social media. "Whoever is President will be blamed."

Brazile noted that, in contrast, President Biden and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., both urged House Republicans to fund the government to avoid the disastrous impacts of a government shutdown.

"Unfortunately, rather than considering themselves public servants, the MAGA House Republicans prioritize serving Trump over their own constituents," Brazile continued. "Instead of focusing on

governing, they are focused on attacking whoever Trump denounces."

Brazile listed several of the social safety net programs that House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-California), supports to appease extreme MAGA Republicans, including:

- Denying food assistance payments to more than 1 million low-income mothers and their children under age 5. This would quite literally take food out of the mouths of babies.

- Slashing housing subsidies for poor families by one-third. A rise in homelessness would be inevitable.

- Cutting aid that helps poor families pay their home heating bills by more than 70%. The Biden administration won congressional approval a year ago

to spend \$4.5 billion on the program to aid over 5 million poor families.

- An 80% cut in funding for public schools that serve many low-income students. This would make it harder for such students to get a good education that would help them work their way into the middle class and higher.

- Cutting over \$150 billion annually from programs that help fund child care, education subsidies, college scholarships, medical research, and hundreds more vital programs.

"It's outrageous that rather than raising taxes on wealthy individuals and corporations to reduce the federal deficit, House Republicans are demanding that low-income Americans bear the brunt of the burden of deficit reduction," Brazile concluded.

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Gospel of the Kingdom



Sister Tarpley
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"This is how we know we are in Him: Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did."

1 John 2:5b-6

When Christ came to earth, He came to bring to mankind the gospel of the Kingdom. Over the centuries, the Church has tended to emphasize only a portion of the gospel.

That portion is the gospel of salvation. However, Jesus came that we might have more than just salvation. He came to give us a whole new life that was accompanied by signs, wonders, and His Spirit living in us and revealing Himself to us daily.

He came so that we might walk on this earth as He did. If our lives are not reflecting the same things



as Jesus' did, we must ask why?

I have noticed three distinct types of believers walking with Christ. First, many of us come to Christ out of a need for salvation. Our hearts have been touched by His call on our lives.

We reason and analyze the claims of Christ and

make a decision for Him. It is the convenient time to accept Him in our lives.

This first stage is often characterized by a "Bless me, Lord" attitude toward God. It is the first stage that primarily brings salvation into our lives. Some never really go past this first stage.

The second stage is the

crisis stage. A crisis takes place in our lives, and we are motivated to seek Christ with a whole heart.

However, this motivation is not out of pure love for Christ; rather, it is motivated by the desire to get out of the pain of living.

The motivation is to solve "the what" versus "the why" in my life at the time. This stage is best characterized as "Help me, Lord."

In the third stage we begin to experience the gospel of the Kingdom. It is the place where Jesus resided in His walk with His heavenly Father. It is the place of conviction.

The numbers of people who live at this level are quite few, but these people are experiencing the reality of a walk with God that is foreign to all others.

They are seeing daily occurrences of His involvement in their lives. They

are motivated by a deep love for Him. They know Him.

These people have an attitude characterized by these thoughts, "Have me, Lord; though He slay me, still will I trust Him."

This is where we will experience the gospel of the Kingdom. Thank God today for standing on the solid Rock of Jesus. Thank Him that your life can be built upon a strong foundation.

Trust God to live, to take every breath based upon the foundation that you can

have in Him. Ask Him to help you to weather life's storms, to help you keep looking to Him, and to be a thankful child...never a complaining Christian.

Pray that God will strengthen you and keep your feet steady on solid ground. Pray for your family members that each one will be committed to God and live a life that glorifies Him and ministers to others in the blessed name of Jesus.

(Editor's Note: This column originally ran in October 2016.)


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NDG Book Review: 'Night Train to Nashville' is a novel, not a memoir

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Deejay, spin those tunes! A few decades ago, that's exactly what you wanted: for a "disc jockey" to play your favorite songs on the radio. You'd call the DJ up on the phone to request a song and he might even make a dedication. It was a time when, as in the new book "Night Train to Nashville" by Paula Blackman, radio was a revolution.

As a young man in the early post-World War II years, E. Gab "Blackie" Blackman's name surely fit him. Relying on his skills of persuasion, Gab worked as an ad man at a Nashville



newspaper and, like every good salesman, he always looked for the next best thing.

Back then, Nashville was as segregated as it got.

Case in point: Gab's

boss.

Every day, "Mister Jimmy" pontificated on race and how he thought segregation wasn't enough, and Gab could clearly see that Mister Jimmy wasn't looking very far into the future. He wasn't paying attention to what was going on in the radio industry or in the new media of TV. Surely, Gab's boss was missing something.

William Sousa "Sou" Bridgeforth knew that his community was about to change in a big way. He was owned a nightclub that catered to Nashville's Black citizens, and for that, he watched what was

happening around him. There'd been a riot over a radio in nearby Columbia, and it was a big deal. That radio, Sou knew, wasn't just a radio.

Just as he'd figured out how to get a new car at a time when automobiles were scarce, Gab Blackman figured out how to make his future better. It was a fact that Black families were consumers, too. If a radio station played nothing but "race music," advertisers could tailor their ads to a specific audience. If he ordered nothing but "race music" for the genre's fans, Gab Blackman could create "a money-making bo-

nanza..."

How much you like "Night Train to Nashville" will depend very much on the kind of book you like to read.

If you're a fan of novels or historical fiction, you'll relish this important story. It's based on real events and tales told decades ago to author Paula Blackman and her "story telling partners," which gives this story a viewpoint from both races. There's a whole range of big names involved in this tale, plenty of nostalgia, and eager dialogue that will take you back decades before it ends on a rather somber note.

If you're a reader who prefers nonfiction, history, or total authenticity, though, it's that dialogue that'll give you pause. Recreated and wholly-invented conversations may ruin the story for you here; what's attributed feels hokey and stiff, and though this book is based in fact, some of it clearly is not. That might make a nonfiction reader wince.

Know what you want from this book, then, before you look for it. Are you a novel lover who will enjoy "Night Train to Nashville"? Or are you a nonfiction fan who'll want to spin it away?

BRANDS, from Page 12

in the face of socially unacceptable brand mentions on Twitter. Separately, in a lab experiment, they show that a more socially unacceptable tweet led fans of National Football League teams to feel a greater sense

of shame, which drove their intentions to disengage from the brand on social media.

Matherly says that "brands can take action to mitigate the risks of disengagement for highly connected consumers. For

example, consumers who were strongly connected to various apparel brands saw a socially unacceptable Reddit post. With no additional information, the consumers indicated they wanted to disengage from the brand, but when they were told about the brand mod-

erating and removing such posts, the desire to disengage was reduced, suggesting that active management of the brand's social media environment is important."

Social media disengagement is costly to brands and is important for both researchers and practition-

ers to understand its drivers. While prior research suggests more highly connected consumers are able to maintain positive attitudes towards a brand when they are exposed to negative brand information, these results suggest that socially unacceptable brand men-

tions may lead to vicarious shame and subsequent disengagement. The insulating effects of strong brand relationships may not be as unequivocal as once thought.

Marilyn Stone is Director, Academic Communities and Journals, American Marketing Association.

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